The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

Entered as second-class matter September 24, 1913, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of August 24, 1912. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Sec. 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized June 11, 1918.

WE PLEDGE—
1 BILLION DOLLARS
IN
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1688 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, AUGUST 17, 1943 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 33, NO. 33

Lewis Bid For Reaffiliation Goes To AFL Convention For Decision

Chicago, Ill.—The application of the United Mine Workers Union for reaffiliation with the American Federation of Labor was routed to the next AFL convention by the Executive Council.

The Council considered a report by a special committee which had conferred with officials of the UMW on jurisdictional questions. President Green said the committee report was "factual" and did not contain any recommendations. A resounding the matter at some length, the Executive Council decided to follow the example of its committee and report the facts to the October convention at Boston without recommendations.

In announcing the Council's action, Mr. Green told a press conference that two jurisdictional questions appeared to bar the issuance of a charter to the UMW at this time. There are the apparently unlimited jurisdiction claimed by District 50 of the miners' union and the protest of the Progressive Mine Workers of America, an AFL affiliate, against the grant of a charter in its own field to a rival union.

Mr. Green said that if John L. Lewis, head of the UMW, wished to confer with the Council's committee again before the convention, he was sure the committee would accommodate him, but the next move is strictly up to Lewis.

Peace Insurance Of Security Bill Must Be Enacted Promptly, AFL Says

Chicago, Ill.—The AFL urged Congress to enact the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Social Security Bill to provide the American people with protection against post-war economic upheavals.

In a statement issued here, the Federation's Executive Council also warned against making this vital measure a political football in the 1944 campaign. Its declaration follows:

The Executive Council calls upon Congress for immediate and favorable action upon the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Social Security Bill.

This measure is urgently needed to enable the government to cushion the shock of post-war economic upheavals.

Delay is dangerous for many reasons. First, there are indications that the war may end before even our most optimistic hopes and it is just as vital to the welfare of our country to be prepared for peace as it is for war. Secondly, if action on this bill is postponed until next year, it may become a political football in the 1944 campaign.

This would be a regrettable development because the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill is essentially a non-political measure. Its outstanding purpose is to secure the people of America against the fear of want and the desperation that results from unemployment, illness and destitution. Surely this is an objective that all political parties should and can unite upon instead of making it a campaign issue.

In fact, it is our opinion that no candidate for public office can oppose this vital legislation and expect the support of the American people at the polls.

The Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill is not a visionary and theoretical proposal. This bill embodies a practical and sound insurance system, self-supporting and worked out on an actuarial basis. It provides merely minimum protection against the hazards of old age, unemployment and permanent disability. Those who are forced by circumstances to seek its benefits will not be able to live in splendor—but at the same time they will not be driven to the wall by the loss of their jobs by accident or disability for work.

The bill will cover 15 million agricultural and domestic workers and self-employed persons who cannot now get the protection of old age and survivors' insurance. It places unemployment insurance on a single, uniform, nation-wide basis, instead of the forty-odd different systems now in force in the various States. It provides health, hospitalization and maternity insurance for the first time. It offers unemployment insurance to the millions of young men in the armed forces who may not be able to find jobs in private industry immediately after the war is over. It sets up a nation-wide system of employment offices to facilitate the orderly absorption of workers into peace-time jobs.

The need of these minimum guarantees for economic safety is scarcely debatable any longer. The people of our country who have been told that fear of want will be abolished as a result of victory in this war will not stand for having their expectations dashed. They will not get the protections provided in this bill as a free gift from the Government, but will pay for the insurance out of their earnings. They are more than willing to do this.

For these reasons, the Executive Council urges the House Ways and Means Committee to put the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill at the top of its list for consideration so that Congress may be given the opportunity to enact this measure in the shortest possible time.

The AFL Plan To Banish Fear of Want

Eleventh Article Sets Forth Importance Of Advisory Committee Participation In Operating Social Insurance

Through advisory committees labor can participate actively with management in improving the operation of our social insurance. Learning what the social security program is all about is the first step labor must take against, we can make suggestions. We can hear what the employers have to say and can tell them how it looks from our angle. We can protest where the law is not working out as it should. We can help to keep the program pointed to conditions as they are.

From the Local Community to Washington and Back Again

The times demand a national system of social security. We cannot chop it up into a lot of separate, unrelated State systems because workers in war industry move from city to city or from state to state in our employment. So social insurance has to be national, just as our railroad system has to be national—because it is not different in different cities or states or local systems. While officials in Washington may have the best intentions in the world it is easy to forget reality and it is hard to imagine something one has never seen. However, we find the same thing in the state capital, and even in our own county and precinct. To safeguard our rights under the more complicated conditions of modern living and working we have been setting up advisory committees in the last few years.

We must keep all social security administration—whether local or national —close to our first-hand experience. As the farmers say, we must have "grass roots" participation. The vote is a democratic instrument; but it does not give enough chance for cooperation with government nowadays. It only registers our general opinions once in a while. Frankly, we feel that national legislators or administrative offices are not enough either; for usually they only succeed in locking the barn door after the horse is stolen.

What Advisory Committees Can Do

But through advisory committees in discussion, we can build many points of view into our basic social security policies. Through advisory committees we can help to plan the basic machinery of social security administration. It is not necessary to duplicate the State system of labor exchanges. As we are building industrial safety into the basic design of new machines instead of waiting to add some safety gadget later, our advisory committees can get the proper specifications into the blueprints of our new social security machinery. Through advisory committees we can also help to meet new or critical questions and can help the technical people on the staff to make decisions which take our interests into account.

Social insurance is about the most important thing in labor's program next to steady employment at good wages. So we need to give special effort to make the most of the opportunity for advisory committee cooperation with every social security office—local, state, regional and national. Some advisory committees are provided for by the present law; others in the proposed amendments which are favored by the AFL. These committees are:

1. The Federal and local advisory councils to the Employment Service.
2. The advisory councils in the local social insurance offices.
3. The Federal advisory council or councils to the Social Security Board (under the proposed amendment).
4. The national advisory council for hospitalization insurance (under the proposed amendment) together with any other necessary local or regional and special or technical boards.

Besides these advisory committees which provide for direct labor representation there are special boards for reviewing the work and the policies of the social security system. All citizens can register their opinions with these boards. They are:

1. The Board of Trustees for the old age and survivors' insurance trust fund (which under the proposed amendment would be the social insurance trust fund). This board must report to Congress on the condition of the fund, at least by January 3 each year.
2. The Social Security Board itself, which is directed by the law to study and to make recommendations on social insurance.

The Union's Job

These committees and boards give us opportunity for bona fide participation in all branches of social security. Our job is to participate actively in the social security program. We must not allow the committees to be merely window dressing or a sounding board. We must take them as seriously as our best negotiating or union-management committees. We must see that our best-qualified people are on the committees. We must make sure that our committee representatives have superior knowledge which fits them to represent us, that they study and inform themselves, attend the committee meetings regularly, and go prepared. They must be thoroughly schooled in labor's point of view and quick to operate their union. They stand for the union's program they should be able to get along with the other members of the committee. They must be ready to give time and hard work.

Through our representatives in the advisory committees we must build our cooperation with the entire social security system, and must build it from the bottom up. Regular union channels we must keep the committees in touch with the way social security is affecting our members. Our local union meetings should make social security a part of their regular order of business. We should refer to our local social security committees for consideration any new and critical questions which local social security offices have. Questions involving local policy can be referred on up to the local advisory committee and the state social security office; and national questions can go on up to Washington in the same way.

Advisory committees are a chance for partnership in getting the job done. The committee is not there to boss the social security office, just as union-management cooperation doesn't mean supplanting the foreman or the executive of the plant. Cooperation through active advisory committees is not pressure politics, either; but is exactly the opposite because it provides for joint participation, and for discussion of employers and labor represented on advisory committees cooperate because each has something at stake and something to contribute.

This kind of participation takes hard work. We must train ourselves to it as we train to service any intricate and high-powered machine; and we must stay on the job. Government cannot operate democratically if the people go to sleep and then everything is paid wrong, no matter how conscientious they are and how thoroughly we trust them. The paid staff cannot possibly know what is happening to labor unless we tell them. But through advisory committee representatives we can gather up our local members' experience; we can weigh and sift it; we can make it useful to our local social security program. We must do the same thing for our state and on up to our national social security program. All the way up and down the line we must participate with management and with the social security officers in building our system of social insurance.

Advisory committees have been great power; but it is a heavy responsibility to make our social security advisory committees work properly. We owe that to society, to ourselves and to our families. While we are safeguarding and improving our social security we are perfecting the instrument for democratic participation in all parts of government; we are retooling democracy for the future.

A. F. OF L. COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY.

MATTHEW WOLL, *Chairman*.
GEORGE MEANY,
G. M. BUGNIAZET,
JOHN P. FREY.

AFL Launches "All-Out" Political Drive For 1944; Demands Congress Repeal Connally-Smith Act; Urges "Jobs-For-All" Post-War Production Program

Events Prove Anti-Labor Law Promotes Strikes in War Industries, Council Says

Chicago, Ill.—The AFL Executive Council demanded prompt repeal of the Connally-Smith Act because events have proved that it tends to promote strikes rather than prevent them.

The Council blamed the anti-labor law for disrupting war production and creating chaotic conditions in many plants where otherwise exercise of normal union discipline would have averted a crisis. Thus, the efforts of AFL unions to comply with the no-strike pledge are actually being thwarted by this obnoxious legislation, the Council charged. Its statement follows:

Continued successful enforcement of the American Federation of Labor's no-strike pledge is seriously threatened by the Connally-Smith Act. Events already have proved the validity of our warning to Congress at the time the measure was being considered. We said then that this ill-considered law would promote strikes rather than prevent them. That is just what is happening now.

Under Attorney General Biddle's interpretation of the ambiguous language of this law, any group of employes in a war plant—no matter how small a minority they represent—may petition for a strike vote.

Then the way is opened for disrupting production and creating chaotic conditions in thousands of cases where otherwise the exercise of union discipline would have averted the crisis from coming to a head.

There are always a disgruntled few in any plant who are dissatisfied with conditions and advocate extreme measures. Nowadays, with prices of food increasing steadily while wages remain frozen, such troublemakers find it easier than ever to gain converts. Without the Connally-Smith Act, unions would be able in almost every case to prevail upon the workers to submit their grievances to the War Labor Board and reach a settlement in an orderly way without interrupting production. But with the Connally-Smith Act in operation, the efforts of our unions to comply with the no-strike policy at all costs can be and are being thwarted.

This is one of many ways in which the impractical provisions of the Connally-Smith Act are proving oppressive to both industry and labor alike and are endangering the war production program.

The Executive Council is gratified by the fact that public opinion is beginning to crystallize in opposition to this law which nullifies the fundamental freedoms of American workers.

We hope that the members of Congress who voted to enact this Fascist measure over the President's veto will weigh the results of their hasty action during their present vacation and be prepared to reconsider when they return to Washington next month.

Events have fortified the Executive Council in its conclusion that this law is an instrument of oppression which is bound to work serious injury to the nation's war effort. The American Federation of Labor will make every effort to secure its prompt repeal.

RED CROSS WORKERS AID U. S. TROOPS IN SICILY

Washington, D. C.—American Red Cross workers landed with the troops in Sicily and are now with the Red Cross services to the men of the United States' forces, Chairman Norman H. Davis said.

At least 15 Red Cross field directors and assistant field directors landed at an early stage in the operations, he asserted. Another still larger group, including three women workers, has left North Africa, for the Sicilian area, Mr. Davis said. Other personnel will be moved into the same area, when required.

AFL-BUILT SHIP LAUDED FOR BATTLE-ZONE ACTION

Richmond, Calif.—AFL workers at the Kaiser Permanente Metals Corp. Yard No. 2 here have received congratulations from Chairman Emory S. Land, of the U. S. Maritime Commission, on the way the Liberty ship, S.S. George B. Selden, built by them, performed in battle zones.

The Selden, according to Land, "battled her way successfully through the Pacific, Atlantic and Mediterranean war zones" and has just returned to this country with huge quantities of captured German and Italian war material.

NAGLER, ULRICH NAMED AFL DELEGATES TO BTUC

Chicago, Ill.—AFL President William Green announced the appointment of Isidore Nagler, Vice President of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, and H. D. Ulrich, New England chief of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, as fraternal delegates to the forthcoming American Federation of Labor at the convention of the British Trades Union Congress which opens in Southport, England, Sept. 6.

The delegates, who will leave this country shortly, will report to the British labor convention on the outstanding labor developments in America and will bring back to the AFL annual convention at Boston next October an up-to-the-minute account of the activities and policies of British labor, especially with regard to the war effort and post-war plans.

TREASURY EXPLAINS WITHHOLDING TAX

Washington, D. C.—American labor has the proud record of paying a greater portion of the nation's income tax than ever before and meeting its tax obligations with a fine civic spirit which is setting an example for the rest of the country, Treasury Department officials told a special labor press conference here.

At the same time these officials emphasized that only a small percentage of wage-earners will be required to make income tax returns September 15, but they urged that each worker make sure that he is not one of those who, under the law, will have to file a return at that time.

Harold Graves, Assistant Commissioner of Internal Revenue, told labor reporters that under the new system of the withholding tax, which went into effect July 1, the large majority of the nation's taxpayers will become automatically current on their 1943 taxes and will have no additional payments to make, except for a possible small balancing payment when the year-end report is filed next March 15.

However, some persons—those making over $3,000 if married, as well as those with supplemental sources of income—will be required to file before September 15 to file declarations of estimated income for 1943 and at that time to pay at least half of the balance of the estimated tax due.

Mr. Graves said that every person who filed an income tax return last March will shortly receive a blank to be filled out by September 15 if his income is above a prescribed amount. He urged that everyone study the form carefully in order to ascertain whether or not he falls in the group which owes more in September. Only then will the taxpayers who have to make an additional payment, be asserted.

N. Y. FEDERATION READY FOR ITS 80TH MEETING

Buffalo, N. Y.—The most important convention in its long history will be conducted by the New York State Federation of Labor here beginning Monday, Aug. 23. It will be the eightieth annual meeting of the oldest and largest State Federation in the nation.

President William Green and Secretary-Treasurer George Meany of the American Federation of Labor and a host of labor and government luminaries who will address the convention. Because of wartime travel conditions the number of delegates is expected to be somewhat smaller than in former years, but the convention will represent the largest membership ever—1,500,000 men and women.

Wages and manpower in booming New York labor's aid to the war effort will occupy top position on the agenda. Other topics will be accorded much attention are defense of labor's rights against those who are using the war as an excuse to injure workers and their organizations, and preparations to insure full employment after the war ends.

Thomas A. Murray is president of the New York State Federation of Labor and E. W. Edwards is secretary-treasurer. Mr. Murray was elected to the post following the death of Thomas J. Lyons last spring.

NOTICE TO EDITORS

The special Labor Day clipsheet of the American Federation of Labor Weekly News Service will be mailed to all labor editors Thursday, August 19. The clipsheet will be accompanied by several appropriate mats.

Unions To Join In Campaign To Get Out Full Labor Vote And Follow Non-Partisan Policy

Chicago, Ill.—The American Federation of Labor launched a nation-wide political drive to elect members of Congress in 1944 who are friendly to labor's cause. President William Green announced that the Executive Council had authorized a concerted campaign to get out the labor vote in every city. Instructions will be sent to all affiliated unions, including city central bodies and State Federations, to see to it that all AFL members register in accordance with local laws so that they may be eligible to vote. Likewise, local campaign committees will be under orders to follow up on the membership and make certain they go to the polls on election day. Mr. Green emphasized that the Executive Council had reaffirmed the Federation's traditional non-partisan political policy. This provides for the election of labor's friends and the defeat of its enemies, regardless of their political affiliations. Also, the Federation will endorse no national political party or ticket.

A national, non-partisan political committee will be set up in Washington to check the voting records of all candidates for public office and to decide whether the AFL will endorse or oppose them in accordance with their attitude on labor questions.

This committee will be composed of President Green, Secretary-Treasurer George Meany and the legislative representatives on the AFL staff.

Mr. Green disclosed that the Executive Council had rejected a bid by the CIO political committee headed by Sidney Hillman for joint action. He said the Council had decided that the Federation Committee should not become entangled with committees representing other organizations.

"We could not afford to jeopardize the success of our own non-partisan political policy by getting mixed up with other organizations not representing the labor movement and not guided by its principles," he said.

He pointed out that in many cases, both the AFL and the CIO may oppose the same candidate for office because of his bad voting record. In other cases, however, there may be a difference of opinion and the AFL will act in accordance with its own judgment, rather than permit itself to be swayed by other considerations.

Launching of the machinery for the 1944 political campaigns climaxed a long series of important actions by the Executive Council during its midsummer meeting, outstanding among which were:

Demands for a post-war economic program that will provide jobs for ex-soldiers and workers now engaged in war industries. Support of the President's demobilization protection plans for war workers, plus a pledge that AFL unions will safeguard their seniority rights and do everything possible to facilitate their return to jobs in peace industry. A call for prompt repeal of the Connally-Smith Act because experience has shown it promotes strikes rather than preventing them. An urgent plea for immediate enactment of the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Social Security Bill to provide adequate security against the fear of want and the hazards of ill-health and disability in the post-war period.

In addition to these matters, the Council was kept busy preparing its annual report to the AFL convention which opens in Boston next October.

Jobs For Veterans And War Workers Is Top Goal Of AFL's Peace Program

Chicago—The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor proposed to the nation a sweeping program for the economic rehabilitation of America after the end of the war to see to it that jobs may be provided in private industry for the millions of returning soldiers and sailors and the other millions of production soldiers now serving in war plants on the home front.

The Council's program for demobilization protection and a post-war program for the veterans of this war but declared it would be inadequate without a peace-time production drive on a scale larger even than the present war setup.

The Federation leaders further pledged themselves to take all possible steps to protect the seniority rights of those now serving in the armed forces, to facilitate their return to their former jobs and "to give them every opportunity to make up for lost time in seeking economic and social advancement." The text of the official declaration follows:

The Executive Council has given earnest consideration to President Roosevelt's proposals for action in behalf of those now serving in the armed forces and in war industry during the demobilization period. He has urged mustering-out pay, unemployment compensation and disability benefits for the veterans of this war. These recommendations are meritorious and constructive so far as they go. They are, however, only temporary, stop-gap protections.

The real answer to the problem of demobilization, as all will concede, is to find jobs in private industry for those who are mustered out of the armed forces. The government alone cannot provide these jobs nor should it be expected to do so. Primarily it is the responsibility of management and organized labor operating under our free enterprise system. Furthermore, the problem is not restricted to those in the armed forces. The same post-war predicament confronts the millions of workers now engaged in the manufacture and transportation of war materials. Obviously, if we are to have idle factories after the war is over private industry will not be able to employ the millions of ex-soldiers and war workers who will be seeking jobs. Our objective, therefore, must be to prepare a peace time production program which will reach even larger proportions than the present war production drive. The American Federation of Labor does not share the pessimistic attitude of those who foresee only a gloomy future as the inevitable aftermath of the war.

On the contrary, we anticipate opportunities for business expansion unparalleled in the history of our country. Stocks of consumer goods, the demand for which will be heavy, have practically vanished. Private housing construction, which has been at a standstill since Pearl Harbor, should boom. Foreign trade for the rehabilitation of those nations which have been devastated by war should flourish. New inventions developed under the stress of war emergency can be applied to peace-time uses, thereby creating large new industries.

These opportunities for the development of peace-time prosperity must not be missed because of lack of enlightened incentive or lack of coordinated cooperation. Our rapid progress along the road to military victory emphasizes the urgency of being ready and equipped to tackle the economic problems of peace.

The first step in preparation for the revitalization of business and industry is to make advance plans for rapid reconversion from a wartime to a peace-time basis. We all remember the ultimate delay encountered in the conversion process after Pearl Harbor. Those mistakes must not be repeated. The Executive Committee of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers blazed the trail toward this objective last January when it inaugurated a series of conferences with the National Electrical Contractors Association for the purpose of working out joint solutions of the industry's post-war problems. Among the subjects now being surveyed as a result of these meetings are how to reconvert the industry as quickly as possible, how to increase peace-time production, how to eliminate waste and inefficiency and how the union and the employers can best promote maximum output and top employment. The Executive Council heartily recommends similar labor-management cooperation in all plants and in all industries. Such joint efforts to workers, employers and the nation as a whole would be invaluable.

To this end we endorse the President's proposals for the protection of those now serving in the armed forces. It urges joint action by labor, management and the government to stimulate peace-time production and full employment. And it wishes to take this opportunity of assuring our men in uniform that the American Federation of Labor is determined to do everything in its power to protect their seniority rights, to facilitate their return to their former jobs and to give them every opportunity to make up for lost time in seeking economic and social advancement. America can do no less for those who have risked their lives and suffered and sacrificed in order that our way of life may be safeguarded and preserved for all time.